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## **Madison Children's Museum CEO Tom Linfield Resigns Due to Health Reasons**

(Madison, Wis.) — Tom Linfield, President and CEO of Madison Children's Museum, announced his resignation due to health reasons today. Linfield has served Madison Children's Museum since June 2024.

Chair of the Board of Trustees Matt Cornwell shared: "We are grateful for Tom's service as President and CEO for the past 16 months. The entire Board of Trustees wants to wish him well and thank him for the work he put into the Museum."

Linfield will remain in the role until November 3. The Board of Trustees has also announced that Brenda Baker, vice president of exhibits, facilities, and strategic initiatives, and Kia Karlen, vice president of education and community engagement, will step in as interim Co-CEOs while the Board evaluates next steps.

"The Board is thrilled to announce that longtime senior leaders at Madison Children's Museum Brenda Baker and Kia Karlen have agreed to step into Interim Co-CEO roles," Cornwell said. "Brenda and Kia have each served the museum for more than 30 years, working to create and steward this beloved, magical place for the Madison community. They have been a big part of the heart and soul of the museum and the Board of Trustees has full confidence that Madison Children's Museum is in the best possible hands with both of these experienced and respected leaders."

Brenda Baker has worked at Madison Children's Museum for over 35 years, curating the exhibit spaces and supporting the institution's national reputation as a leader in sustainability. Baker previously served on the Board of Trustees for the Association of Children's Museums, and was a Noyce Fellow at the Noyce Leadership Institute. An accomplished sculptor and artist, she has infused the arts throughout the museum. Baker is also the co-founder of the Women Artists Forward Fund.

Kia Karlen has dedicated herself to the local arts and culture community, serving Madison Children's Museum for over 32 years as the lead on community programs and education. Karlen is the champion behind many of MCM's public programs, and is a celebrated musician who brings her love of music into these initiatives. She previously served as chair of the Madison Arts Commission, chair of the Program Committee for the Association of Children's Museums, and led the Midwest hub for the National Science Foundation's National Living Lab Initiative.

Both Baker and Karlen have been instrumental in raising millions of dollars at Madison Children's Museum through federal grants and other philanthropic support.

**Madison Children's Museum:**

- Connects children with their families, their community and the world beyond through **creative learning** and **discovery play**
- Strives to make all families feel welcome, valued, and included by living the ideals of **Access, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**
- Is a **community hub** for children and families from every corner of Madison, and serves more than **200,000** visitors per year
- Is a **community partner** and **gateway for families** to access and participate in other cultural institutions and community programs

Founded in 1980, the museum's hands-on exhibits and programs celebrate and encourage children's imaginations and the power of play as cornerstones of learning. The museum is a proud recipient of the 2011 National Medal for Museum Service from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. To learn more, visit [MadisonChildrensMuseum.org](http://MadisonChildrensMuseum.org), call (608) 256-6445, and follow on Facebook and Instagram.

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